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A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF ONE HUNDRED GIRLS WHO ATTENDED, DURING THE YEARS 1938-1947, VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AT WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS AND WHO LEFT THE SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATING

Submitted by

Anna Marie Lee (B.S.E., Worcester State Teachers' College, 1931)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of Education

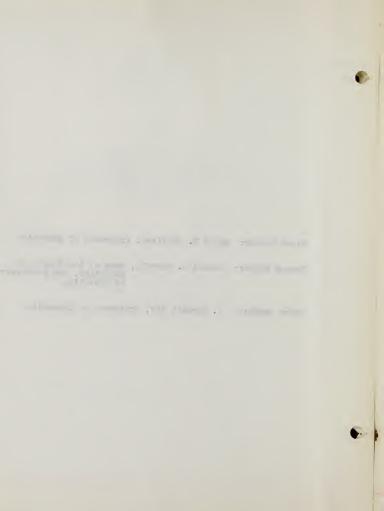
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anna Marie Lee School of Education June 13 1949:

First Reader: Helen B. Sullivan, Professor of Education

Second Reader: Donald D. Durrell, Dean of the School of Education, and Professor of Education

Third Reader: J. Wendell Yeo, Professor of Education



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CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is planned to discover what social and vocational adjustments have been made by one hundred girls who attended Vocational School in Worcester, Massachusetts, during the period between June, 1937 and June, 1947, and who left school before graduation from Grade Nine-two. In the light of the data gathered it is hoped to determine the degree to which these girls have been helped to meet the problems with which they are confronted after leaving school and to discover the effectiveness of the training offered at Vocational School. It is probable that the study will indicate ways in which the present school program may be improved.

The investigation should answer such pertinent questions as the following:

- 1. What was their average grade level of academic achievement as determined by teachers' marks?
- 2. What were the reasons that these girls left school before graduating?
- 3. How many have received further training than that given at Vocational School ?
- 4. What is their attitude toward the academic subjects taught at the school ?

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- 5. What is their attitude toward the vocational training received at the school ?
- 6. Do the girls find work readily ?
- 7. At what type of work do they find employment ?
- 8. To what extent do they make use of their vocational training ?
- 9. What is the marital status of the girls in this group ?
- 10. How do these girls spend their leisure time ?

The Vocational School in Worcester is an outgrowth of the Continuation School which opened about 1920 to provide part-time education for those employed who had not reached the age of sixteen years. In 1931, when labor laws were more strictly enforced, industry was compelled to dispense with these young people and they returned to a full-time school program. Since they were, for the most part, the non-academic type of pupil, a program differing from the traditional school program was planned. Up to this time there had been no special provision in the school system of Worcester to take care of the slow learning child. There were preparatory schools for the superior child, special classes for the mentally retarded, and junior high schools, so now it was decided to provide for those who did not successfully fit into any of these classes. The chief

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object of the program is not to require the academic performance demanded of the normal child, but to develop the vocational abilities of these slow-learners with the view of getting them into the Trade schools or preparing them for jobs. Many of the pupils would drop out of school as soon as they reached sixteen years of age and go to work. The school plans to develop in these young people a willingness and desire to get into trade training and be better prepared to enter the world of work.

The Vocational School is situated in the center of the city and can accommodate about 300 boys and 200 girls whose chronological ages range from 12 to 18 years, and whose I. Q.'s range from approximately 60 to 120. After completing Grade Nine, a diploma entitles the graduate to enter the second year class at Commerce High School or the Trade High School. Since the vocational training given at Vocational School would be good preparation for the trade school, the pupils are urged to go there. If a girl completes grades 8-2 with a good record, she may ask for admission to the beginning class at Trade School. She is then given an interview with the trade school director who decides whether or not to accept her at this time.

The name Vocational School may be somewhat misleading and a more appropriate mame might be "Pre-vocational".

Although Vocational School prepares pupils for the course

at the Trade School, it is quite separate from it and is the only school of its kind in the State, the City of Worcester bearing the entire expense of it.

In this city there are two Trade schools -- one for girls and one for boys. The Girls' Trade School, now called Trade High School, was organized primarily to train girls for industry. It also guides them, gives counsel, and as far as possible, places them in positions for which they are trained. The school also acts as a guide in helping each girl to select the vocation best suited for her. Trades such as catering, dressmaking, hairdressing, homemaking, millinery, power operating, printing, and retail selling are offered by the school. Girls from Worcester and the County attend.

The Vocational School offers a good preparation for work at the Trade School, as exploratory and interesting courses in various vocational fields are given such as: the garment trade, cafeteria work, practical nursing, and home making.

There are three grades, seventh, eighth, and ninth, at the school. Any pupil who has completed grade six of the regular schools of the city and who is recommended by the Principal and the teacher of her school and has her parents' consent may enter the Vocational School classes. The school opens at eight-thirty and closes at one, thus allowing the

pupils opportunity for part-time employment. The boys occupy one section of the building and the girls, another. This study will deal only with the girls who have spent at least one year at the school, but who dropped out before completing the three grades and graduating. Another study is being made at this time regarding those girls who graduated from the school.

The school day is divided equally for the girls between the academic offerings and the vocational pursuits. The academic classes follow, with adaptations, the courses of study of the regular grades of the city. Arithmetic, English, history, reading, and spelling are taught in grades seven and eight; business arithmetic, English, cooperative citizenship, and science are taken up by the ninth grade. Group guidance is carried on in the "Study of Occupations" class which is held once a week.

Foods and Clothing are offered to the seventh and eighth grades and Home Nursing to the ninth grade. The American Youth Commission discussing marriage and the home says:

Many practical and valuable aspects of home management are being taught effectively in home economics classes in the secondary schools throughout the country. Such classes for girls should be made universally available. Child care has become a major part of home economics curricula; this is one of the soundest and most valuable elements for home and family life. 1/

^{/ &}quot;Youth and the Future", Report of the American Youth Commission, American Council of Education, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 174.

There are three vocational teachers specially trained for their jobs at the Vocational School. They have mapped out their own courses of study and have tried to design them to fit the needs of the pupils. According to Spafford:

Hone economics teachers cannot agree once and for all on the objective of home-sconomics, the subject matter and activities, the kind of rooms and equipment needed, because home economics, rightly planned, deals with a unit of society, not a body of organized knowledge. It cannot be treated like history or mathematics, science or language. What is needed would seem to be not a fixed program, but a more clearly defined sense of direction.

In the clothing class the girls are taught to make practical and skilful use of basting, running, overcasting, and hemming stitches. They practice the processes of hemming, French seaming, and flat seaming. They also learn how to interpret a pattern, to operate an electric sewing machine, and to make various articles of clothing. The girls furnish their own cloth and, in the second year of the course, they make their dresses, suits, and, in some instances, their winter coats. Skill in cleaning and pressing garments is also taught.

The objectives of the foods class are as follows:

- To prepare the girl for more efficient, happy, healthful living.
- To develop sufficient skill so that the girl may be able to help in the preparation and serving of everyday inexpensive foods.

I/ Ivol Spafford, Fundamentals in Teaching Home Economics. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1935, 424 pp.

- 3. To help in the wise selection of foods.
- To promote a spirit of home helpfulness and love for the home.

The home nursing teacher, a registered nurse who had had practical experience as a district nurse before becoming a teacher, instructs the girls of the ninth grade in the following:

Personal Hygiene -- the care of the skin, teeth, hair and nails; the value of good posture, fresh air and sunshine.

Child Care -- the nursery, the bathing, teething, feeding, and development of the child.

Care of the Sick-- bed making, the occupied bed, symptoms
of sickness, reading a thermometer,
bathing and feeding the sick.

First Aid -- the care of wounds, the treatment of burns, shock, fainting, and nosebleed.

Many of the girls who come to Vocational School come from homes in the less desirable parts of the city. In many cases, the parents are either dead, divorced, or remarried. The family income is often too small to take adequate care of the usually large family. Many of the girls obtain part-time employment as soon as possible to earn money to help take care of their needs. They are often left to their own devices by working parents. The Vocational

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School is aware of the problem of proper use of leisure time with these people. They should, as Ingram says, "be prepared for the right use of leisure time through the formation of right habits and attitudes."

Martens says concerning this, "The fundamental aim of all education is to teach children to live wisely and well in the environment in which they find themselves."

A part of the duty of each teacher at Vocational School is to visit the home of each child in her class and discuss with the parents the program at the school and to solicit the cooperation of the home in carrying this program through. A record of the visit is made out by the visiting teacher, and kept on file in the school office. A copy of the blank used for this purpose is filed in Appendix B of this thesis.

Heck says concerning home visits:

Every teacher ought to know each of her pupils. Such knowledge implies a knowledge of his past school record, of home conditions, of playtime activities, of his extreme likes and dislikes, and of his physical, mental, and emotional maturity. A visit to the home to discuss the child with the mother is one of the best ways of really knowing him. It is a bit futile to try to help a pupil catch the meaning of a lesson assignment when he is emotionally wrought up over home disagreements, when he lacks sleep due to night work, when he is weak from lack of food, when he is disturbed because of the rough treatment he receives

^{1/} Christine P. Ingram, Education of the Slow-Learning Child. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1935, p. 69.

^{2/} Elise H. Martens, A Guide to Curriculum Adjustment for Mentally Retarded Children. Bulletin No.11, U.S. Dept. of Int.

^{3/} Arch O. Heck, Education of Exceptional Children. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1940.

from the school gang or because of the teacher's crossness, which throws him into confusion.

Many of the pupils who come to Vocational School dislike school. Some of them because of failure and repetition
have become listless, indifferent, idle, and careless. It
is no small part of the teacher's work to try to change
these unwholesome attitudes. As the numbers in each class
are relatively small, much needed individual teaching can
be done. Rarely is a girl asked to repeat a grade, an
effort being made to make up losses as she goes along.
This method is found to give much needed encouragement
and usually results in a more cooperative attitude on
the part of the pupil. This agrees with the ideas of
Brueckner who says,

It has been conclusively demonstrated by wellconducted experiments that for ensured and continued growth a much wiser and more profitable procedure than non-promotion is to adapt instruction to the needs of the pupil at all times and at the end of the year to advance him to the next class and there continue to adjust instruction to his needs.

The Vocational School aims to help each pupil in the following ways:

 To evaluate her natural aptitudes, interests, and capacities in making proper educational and vocational plans.

^{1/} Leo J. Brueckner, The Changing Elementary School.
New York: Inor Publishing Company, Inc., 1941, p. 89.

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- To become aware of educational and occupational opportunities, and to help each take advantage of these
- 3. To discover and practice wise use of leisure time
- 4. To appreciate the importance of becoming a considerate and cooperative fellow-worker.

Has the school succeeded in these aims? One of the best ways to find out to what extent it has succeeded is through a follow-up study inquiring into the adult adjustment of these girls. With this purpose in mind, the following investigation was planned.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Attention is called to the needs of all handicapped groups in the report of the White House Conference Which points out that follow-up of the slow learner is an important aspect of his education. These needs are summarized and include the following: an early discovery and diagnosis which will determine the nature and extent of the handicans of the child: social contacts of the handicapped child with both normal and other handicapped children which will instill in him self-confidence, good morale, and a spirit of independence: a differentiation of educational methods and procedures required by the handicapped child's special needs; educational and vocational guidance which will discover his general abilities and aptitudes and secure for him that type of general educational and vocational training through which his vocational objectives may be achieved: placement in employment which will afford the handicapped child suitable and remunerative employment opportunities: follow-up in employment to continue until the child is reasonably adjusted to his employment and environment.

I/ White House Conference, Addresses and Abstracts of Committee Reports, edited by Katherine Glover and Winifred Mason, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1931, p. 318.

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Gossard made an investigation of the development of provisions made for backward children in school systems of ten large cities since 1870.

At the beginning of the period of 1870 almost the only interest expressed in slow pupils in the upper years of the systems pertained to keeping them out of these levels or eliminating them from the upper grades if they did succeed in entering. Compulsory school attendance laws and recent economic depression increased greatly the concern about provisions for individual differences. A few rare individuals early in the period grasped much of the significance of individual differences. In recent years, there has been a general recognition of wide ranges in intelligence and acceptance of a belief in different kinds of abilities. As a result, for slow pupils there has been much increased use of certain types of motor activities, particularly those allied to manual arts.

In recent years there have been many surveys dealing with young people who dropped out of school at an early age. These studies endeavor to find out what adjustment pupils have made in the world of work and how the educational program of the school has helped or failed to help them.

^{1/} Arthur P. Gossard, Superior and Backward Children in the Public Schools. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1940.

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A national survey of working youth under 18 years of age was made by the Children's Bureau in 1936 in six states. Trained and untrained youth were compared as to their economic status after leaving school. The survey brought out that failure to finish the prescribed course had a definite effect on the employment obtained. Those with training fared somewhat better than did those without any training. It was pointed out that vocational training would be far more effective if there were opportunity for individual guidance for pupils in the public schools. Only one youth in six in four of the large cities surveyed reported having received any guidance prior to entering Vocational School. It was reasoned that a more adequate system of guidance would have discouraged some of the youth of the other fivesixths who were least fitted for the type of training offered and they might have been persuaded to change from one program to another so that their training would be more appropriate to their abilities. This survey brought out the fact that only about 13 per cent of the young 16 and 17 year old workers who had failed to complete any definite course of training were employed on jobs related to their training.

^{1/} Vocational Training and Employment of Youth. Federal Works Agency, Works Project Administration, Division of Research, Children's Eureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1936.

The outstanding need of young people leaving school as reported by Bell and Reeves is that of finding jobs. In 1937, 20 per cent of the nation's available workers were classified as totally unemployed or engaged in emergency work; 30 per cent of the nation's youth were similarly classified.

Recent studies of students who have dropped out of school show that the majority of drop-outs are 16 years of age; the majority drop out from the ninth or tenth grade; the majority have the ability to profit from further education; the majority drop out because they no longer wish to remain in school, not because it is financially necessary for them to go to work. These findings were reported by Gertrude F. Zimand, General Secretary, National Child Labor Committee, in an article entitled "Don't Let Them Quit School," in the August, 1947, Parents' Magazine.

^{1/} F.W. Reeves and Howard M. Bell, The Needs of Youth in Modern America. Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, No. 90, April, 1940.

^{2/} Getrude F. Zimand, "Don't Let Them Quit School," Parents' Magazine, Vol. 22, August, 1947, p. 14.

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An investigation was sponsored by the United States Government and was made by Channing, in 1932, for the Children's Bureau. It brought about a detailed report of the industrial adjustment of special class pupils in seven representative cities in the United States. The pupils had been out of school from three to seven years. The lowest I.Q. of this group was 55. She found that 94 per cent had been employed, that the older girls received higher pay than the younger girls, and that they were working in jobs which required little previous training. Those without personality difficulties received better pay. She also found that the elements entering into failure or success are no different for the mentally slow than they are for those of normal intelligence.

Marie M. Proffett, Educational Consultant and Specialist in Industrial Education, reports that of all our people who are gainfully employed, 22 per cent are women. Women constitute about 14 per cent of all persons gainfully employed in manufacturing and mechanical industries. It is estimated that about one-third of drivers of automobiles are women.

^{1/} Alice Channing, "Employment of Mentally Deficient Boys and Girls," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Government Printing Office, 1932.

^{2/} Marie M. Proffett, "Education of Girls in an Industrial Society," School Life, Vol. 24, February, 1939, p. 151.

The following are state-wide surveys that have been made in the last fifteen years.

The Massachusetts Legislature authorized a survey in 1933 for the purpose of determining the need for social supervision of children under twenty-one who had attended special classes in the state. Four hundred forty-nine boys and girls in different sections of the state were investigated. A group of 219 pupils in special classes and one of 230 mentally retarded youth who had left special classes and whose ages were from 16 to 21 years, made up the total. A survey blank was used containing 25 questions as to the school history, social adjustments, family history, employment, and use of leisure time. Employers, teachers, pastors, and others who could give any information about those investigated were also questioned. Among the conclusions of the study are the following: (a) a rather large number of special class pupils are successful, socially and vocationally; (b) training is more important for their success than academic learning: (c) delinquency was not found to be a definite characteristic of this group, and (d) visiting teachers should be employed and should make provision for the out-of-school youth.

^{1/} Arthur B. Lord, "A Survey of Four Hundred Forty-Nine Special Class Pupils," Journal of Educational Research, Vol. XXVII, October, 1933.

In 1936-1937, the American Youth Council, through its own staff, conducted a state-wide survey in the state of Maryland involving comprehensive interviews with over 13000 youth aged 16 to 17 years, to seek information concerning the status and attitude of American youth. This study reveals that 40 per cent never had gone beyond the eighth grade. 25 per cent entered high school but did not graduate, 25 per cent left after graduating and 10 per cent received some education beyond the high school. The median grade attainment of the out-of-school youth is about the completion of the ninth grade as compared with the eighth grade as the median grade attainment of youth over twenty-one for the nation. There was significantly more unemployed youth in the group which left below the ninth grade. There is a substantial number of young people for whom the present school programs have little or no appeal and who drop out. not so much for economic reasons as through indifference. For them, the obvious solution is the development of school programs that are more adapted to their interests and needs. From the study it was found that guidance is one of youth's most pressing necessities. The increasing complexities and tempo of modern life demand a more effective system to steer youth into appropriate channels of employment. Because of

^{1/} Howard M. Bell, Youth Tell Their Story. American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

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the lack of employment and the reduction of working hours, the matter of leisure time becomes a problem of real significance. One of the major objectives of modern education is the training of youth and adults alike for a constructive use of their leisure time.

In 1941, Long set up a study to gather information concerning a group of school-leaving youth and to analyze the information in an attempt to discover factors associated with tenure of employment. The data was concerned with the school background of the youth, the youth's work history from the time he left school until the time he was interviewed, and the opinions, attitudes, and ideas of the youth concerning his occupational experiences and plans.

The youth were selected from six schools located in Connecticut and New Jersey. The random sampling was picked by the principals and contained the names of pupils who had graduated, or dropped out of these schools from 1934 to1938. Among many of the findings this study showed that when the head of the family was unemployed, the prosperity of the home was usually impaired, and the necessity for giving financial aid to the home was a more powerful influence in stimulating girls to remain employed than it was for boys.

^{1/} C. Darl Long, School Leaving Youth and Employment. Contributions to Education, No. 845, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1941.

Girls from broken homes exceeded in employment those whose homes were intact. Girls whose parents were both foreign born maintained a higher percentage of employment than did the daughters of parents of mixed nativity. Long also found that youth who contribute to their support during the time in which they were in school developed qualities which were associated with success in holding jobs after their school days were past. The evidences of the study lent support to the contention that the requirements to continuous employment in the jobs actually held by the majority of the youth were only remotely related to the requirements for success in academic school subjects. He suggests that more attention to the study of the common, everyday semi-skilled and unskilled occupations in group guidance and occupational information classes might pay dividends in better adjusted youth. Long also found that there was a significant association between school recorded intelligence and tenure of employment for girls.

Reasons which pupils offer for entering a vocational or trade school have also been investigated as shown by the next two studies.

1/ Long, op. cit.

Harvey C. Lehman and Paul A. Witty made one of the most complete studies of the motives which underlie a child's choice of a vocation by administering the Lehman-Witty Quiz to a large number of children in Topeka, Kansas, and in Kansas City, Missouri. Their results suggest that three factors (1) financial returns, (2) public esteem, and (3) a desire for easy work were important factors in that order. Other factors were security of tenure, freedom from various kinds of bodily hazards, fitness for occupation, convenience or opportunity for later occupation, and opportunity for service.

A study was made in 1938 in Worcester, Massachusetts, 2/2/2 by McGrail to discover the reasons why 192 girls chose to come to the Trade School. A questionnaire was given to the girls in the first year classes at the Trade School. About 80 per cent stated that the reason that they came to Trade School was because of the advice of their mothers; 71 per cent said that friends attending the school was another reason; 45 per cent gave underlying factors as: pride in the job; experience of their friends; desire to be in a larger group, and desire to earn money. Religion

^{1/} Harvey C. Lehman and Paul A. Witty, "Some Factors which Influence the Child's Choice of an Occupation," Elementary School Journal, Volume 31, December, 1930, pp. 285-291.

^{2/} F.E. McGrail, "Factors Which Contribute to the Choice of a Vocational Course at the David Hale Fanning Trade School for Girls," unpublished Master's Thesis, Clark University, Worcester, 1938.

and nationality were important factors in choice of the hairdressing, homemaking, and retail selling groups. The attitude of the teacher toward her work and toward the girls played little part in the choices of any groups except in the homemaking and retail selling groups.

Many community studies have been made concerning youth after leaving school.

Follow-up studies were made by the Philadelphia Division of Compulsory Education in 1939, and the Junior Employment Service for the School District of Philadelphia again in 1941 and they revealed some reasons why school leavers failed to make satisfactory adjustments after leaving school. A few of the stated reasons were the pupil's limited knowledge of work opportunities, the pupil's ignorance of his own capacities and limitations, and the lack of practice in self-adjustment to life situations.

Warstler conducted in 1940 a long-term follow-up of 618 persons who were in attendance in an Indiana High School from 1925-1939 to find out about their educational and occupational experience. He gathered the information through a two-page questionnaire. He found that those who left school

^{1/} Philadelphia Board of Public Education, Division of Educational Research, "When Philadelphia Youth Leave School at 16 and 17." 1941.

^{2/} A.R. Warstler, "A Long Term Follow-Up of School Leavers," Occupations, Vol. XX, January, 1942, pp. 284-285.

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before graduation had a lower level of jobs than did those who had graduated. Eighty-five per cent of the girls who were out more than ten years were married. Fifty-five per cent of the youth obtained their first job through their own efforts. Lack of interest in school was given as reason for leaving by most of these people.

The author concluded that need for vocational guidance, placement, and follow-up was evident. A continuous and tactful effort was needed to guide students into a more realistic thinking about their occupational status.

The child-labor staff of the United States Department of Labor undertook a study of youth employment problems in 1947. They sought the answers to such questions as why youngsters drop out of school, the kind of jobs they find, and how well they adjust themselves in the working world. As a part of the project 524 youth 14 through 19 years of age were interviewed in Louisville, Kentucky, selected as a representative American city. All of these people were out of school and in the labor market. It was found that two-thirds of those under eighteen years dropped out of school before completing the eighth grade. The reason most frequently given for leaving school was dissatisfaction with some aspect of school life. Lack of money was the next most

I/ Elizabeth S. Johnson and Caroline E. Legg, "Why Young People Leave School --as Told by Young Workers," reprinted for Child Labor Branch, Wage and Hour Public Contracts Division, U.S. Department of Labor, by National Association of Secondary School Principals, Washington, D.C., 1948.

frequent reason given. Inability to find jobs or to keep the jobs they found was a keen difficulty with many. In general, their idea of looking for work was to follow up want ads, ask friends and relatives, or apply directly to employers. About one-third of the 16 and 17 year old people were in manufacturing, 29 per cent in trade, and 20 per cent in service industries. An analysis of the earnings of 443 boys and girls showed that the median hourly wage of the youngest workers was only 46 cents an hour as compared with 71 cents for the 18 and 19 year olds. Another phase of the study was interviewing employers to obtain their viewpoints and practices in employment of young people. Employers felt that youth under 18 are too immature and undependable, and are not physically developed for the job. They expressed the opinion that youngsters having completed their high school education were better adjusted, feeling that the ability to complete a goal and finish a task to be a significant index of stability.

The Rochester Special Education Department carried on a project over a period of five years to gather current data that would be applicable in making a plan for the occupational guidance and placement of the slow-learning girl and to capitalize on the plans.

In 1940-41 a study showed that of 79 former special class girls, the majority of those employed were engaged in some form of food production or service. As a result of this investigation a course in food preparation and cafeteria practices was offered to a selected group of girls between the ages of 15 years to 16 years and six months, preparing for restaurant, cafeteria, and hospital kitchens.

From the recommendations that came out of this project are two that stand out as being of special value:

- To take a longer range view, even to the primary grade in building for occupational success.
- To provide more specific direction in the formation of habits and attitudes that will give the girl orientation in the job.

I/ Catherine Lovell, "Educational Occupational Program for Special Class Girls," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, Vol. LI, January, 1947, pp. 452-455.

A follow-up study was made in Worcester, Massachusetts, by Carroll in which a group of special class girls were matched with a group of high school girls of the same socioeconomic status. In the many comparisons of the study, the special class girls with an average I.Q. of 66 stood up remarkably well against the group of high school girls with an average I.Q. of 95 when the two groups were matched for home background and socio-economic status. In stability of marriage, however, the special class girls had five per cent more unstable marriages than did the high school girls.

In 1939, Eckert and Marshall conducted a study in 51 communities in New York comprising 23,000 pupils for the Regent's Inquiry. They attempted to measure the social fitness of school-leaving youth. The findings of this study brought out that these youth need more preparation that would enable them to make better adjustments. Most of them leave school with no definite plans for the future. Vocation school-leavers seem better able to find jobs and were more contented in them than those having had no vocational training. It was found that the less competent the pupil was, the earlier he withdrew from school to face adult problems. They concluded that chronological age appeared an

^{1/} Lillian C. Carroll, "A Follow-Up Study of Special Class Girls and a Group of High School Girls Matched for Socio-Economic Status," unpublished Master's Thesis, Clark University, Worcester, 1944.

^{2/} Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas C. Marshall, When Youth Leave School. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938.

inadequate means to judge youth's ability to assume out-of-school responsibilities. The total effect of the data covered in respect to the age that youth start work, according to the investigators, calls for an investment of time and thought and money in the development of purposeful programs for young people that would yield gratifying social and economic returns to both the youth who are affected by them and the society that makes them possible.

Summary of the Research. These studies deal in whole or in part with young people who have dropped out of school before completing any definite course of training. Various types of children are included in the studies, the mentally retarded, the slow learner, and the normal, those with vocational training and those without. The studies consist of some that are national in scope, several that are state-wide, some that deal with city surveys and others that have to do with small communities. They extend through a period of time from pre-war to post-war days. The need of the handicapped child as summarized from the White House Conference of 1930 is included as is an investigation of the development of provisions made for backward children in ten large cities since 1870.

The surveys are all concerned with the economic adjustments that young people have made after leaving school. They tend to agree in the following points:

 The usual age for drop-outs is 16 years, the legal school age for most states.

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- 2. The principal reasons for leaving school are: a desire for independence, the availability of jobs, and dissatisfaction with school.
- 3. These youth experienced frequent job changes.
- The majority of the youth obtained their jobs through their own efforts.
- Those with vocational training fared better in obtaining jobs.
- It seems possible that fewer would drop out, if some provisions could be made for part-time employment.
- A lower level of jobs is obtained by the schoolleavers than by those who completed their school program.
- The matter of leisure time looms as a social problem with these young people.

Without exception, these studies emphasize the need for a vocational guidance program, placement, and follow-up services.

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CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE OF THE SURVEY

On file in the Vocational School office are records of all who have attended the school. These records are the source of the following information:

- 1. Name
- 2. Address
- 3. Birthplace and date
- 4. Parents' names
- 5. Nationality
- 6. I.Q. (Otis Intermediate Tests)
- 7. Previous schools attended
- 8. School grades since beginning school
- Health record. (Nurse and doctor put the results of a casual inspection infrequently made on this card).
- 10. A "Home Visit Card" (This is written by visiting teacher)

From this file the names of all the girls who had attended Vocational School during the years of the study, but who had not remained to graduate, were secured; they numbered approximately four hundred. Every fourth name was picked, resulting in one hundred names. Because it was felt that a surplus group was necessary, every third name

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was selected from the remaining list, making one hundred more to be drawn upon. The investigator found it necessary to make inquiries into the present location of 170 before she could find definite information of the whereabouts of 100.

The investigation was begun in October of 1948 and extended over a period of four months. The first step in locating these girls, many of whom had married since leaving school, was to try to contact them by telephone and arrange for an interview. A personal contact was considered the best method to get the desired information, since many of these girls had reading disabilities and might have difficulty in reading and answering questions. It was realized that much traveling could be eliminated by first finding out whether the one to be contacted, or her family still lived at the address given on the school record.

When no telephone number was listed for the given name, often a call to some occupant of the house gave the desired information. If this failed, a street directory at the library was consulted. In a few cases, pupils at the school living in the same neighborhood as those sought, knew them and helped in locating them. When some of the girls were visited, they offered clues as to the whereabouts of others. Many times, it was a neighbor at the given address who supplied helpful information in locating a girl who was proving

difficult to contact. Sometimes visits to several localities were suggested and led to much searching. In spite of this, every effort was made to locate the girls as their names appeared in the sampling.

Questionnaire blanks were prepared for use at each interview and replies were carefully checked. A copy of the Questionnaire is filed in Appendix A. Information concerning the following items was recorded:

Chronological Age

I. Q.

Length of time spent at Vocational School

Grade level reached

Age at leaving school

School attended after leaving Vocational School

First job

If changed, why?

Present job

Type of work Weekly pay

Employment status

Full time Part time Unemployed and seeking work Unemployed and not seeking work Doing housework at home Married woman at home

Marital status

Attitude toward school

Has it helped? in Arithmetic? in English? in Reading?

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Has occupational course been of value?

To what use has vocational training been put?

In clothing? in foods? In home nursing?

The first five questions were answered by reference to the school records.

To save time the names of the one hundred girls to be visited were divided into three groups, those who were married and not working and could be interviewed during the day; the working girls who would be free in the evenings or weekends, and those working in stores who could be contacted on days when the weather conditions were unfavorable for traveling.

With but one exception, all those interviewed cooperated most willingly when the purpose of the survey was made clear to them. They were told that their names were picked at random and that the information given would help other girls at the school. Many showed pleasure that the school was still interested in them.

The married girls proudly showed off their children if they had any, or, as was the case several times, eagerly explained that a baby was soon to arrive. It seemed to the investigator that no more charming setting was desirable than the one where she interviewed by previous arrangement two young mothers, each with a baby playing around the room. They had been friends since early school days. During a

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pleasant visit, tea was served.

At many homes the investigator saw evidences of the skills learned at Vocational School. One girl had made some pretty aprons out of some strips of cloth of various colors. She explained that she had purchased the material in the shop where she worked and remembered that her clothing teacher at school had taught several uses for such pieces. She had intended to give the aprons as Christmas gifts, but decided they were too pretty to part with.

Another girl had made several hats which looked as if a professional milliner had made them. This girl had entered a millinery class at Trade School after leaving Vocational School.

Some of the girls were doing jobs directly related to the skills learned at Vocational School. These included the stitchers, who said if they had not learned to operate an electric sewing machine at school, they would not have been hired for their present job. A girl who had learned how to make doughnuts was doing just this as her daily work. Her job was to mix the dough, roll it out and put it into a machine for frying.

One girl transferred from grade nine-one at Vocational School to Commerce High School where she stayed one year, after which she entered the Worcester Art School, remaining there for two years. Her first job was as a salesgirl in .

a photography shop at a summer resort. During the war she was employed by the Naval Ordinance Department as a civilian inspector of naval equipment at a salary of \$45 a week. At the present time, she is married and not engaged in occupation outside the home.

Another girl, after leaving Vocational School, at the end of grade eight-two entered a Dress Design School where she remained to complete the four-year course and graduate. She is married now and has one child which limits the time that she can give to sewing, but she makes all her own clothes, dresses, suits, and coats. She also does some sewing for relatives and friends.

One girl became interested in nursing after taking the home nursing course and obtained a job at a hospital as a helper in the kitchen. Later she went to Boston and took a course in practical nursing. She is now employed as a nurse's helper in the same hospital where she first worked.

Still another girl who had transferred to Trade School from Vocational School found that when she graduated, the thing that she wished to do was to study nursing, remembering how much she had enjoyed her home nursing course at Vocational School. Later, she went to New York and entered a hospital where she learned to become a nurse's helper and is now employed in a Brooklyn hospital. At the time of

the investigation she was at home on a vacation, and reported how happy she was in her work.

Thirteen of the married girls were working outside the home and several others expressed a desire to get a job, if some way could be arranged to care for their children. Five others had been working, but had stopped because of pregnancy.

In checking up on the information received concerning the places of employment of these girls, it was felt that no personal reference to any girl should be made that might bring embarrassment to the girl. However, several local places of employment were selected where some of the girls worked and the personnel managers were contacted to ascertain what factors influenced them in hiring these young people. The personnel manager at Woolworth's Five and Ten Cents Store where many of the girls obtained work, stated that high school training was desired, but not demanded. A pleasing personality, a well-groomed appearance, and the manner in which responses were made to questions seemed to loom as the most important criteria in the selection of applicants.

In the factories a girl with some background of vocational training is desired as well as one who appeared as a pleasing and cooperative person, courteous, and of neat appearance. - 1- y 0

A visit to the Trade High School and a look at the files showed that 23 of the 100 girls in the study had attended Trade School. The periods that they remained there were from two months to three years; eleven had graduated; two are now students at the school.

The investigator received splendid cooperation wherever this study took her. Permission to carry on the investigation was given by the Superintendent of Schools. The principal, clerk, and teachers at the Vocational School did much to make the work run more smoothly and pleasantly, and the writer wishes to include in this study a word of appreciation for this cooperation.

CHAPTER IV

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Personal. Some of the data required for this investigation was obtained through a careful check of the school files. In this way, the chronological ages of the one hundred girls in the study were obtained. The age range at the time when the girls were visited was from approximately sixteen years to twenty-eight years and eight months, as shown in Table I.

TABLE I

Frequency Distribution of the Ages of the Girls at the Time of the Investigation

Years	Ages when Months		Months	3	Number
27 -	11	29 -	10		9
25 -	11	27 -	10		8
23 -	11	25 -	10		15
21 -	11	23 -	10		17
19 -	11	21 -	10		18
17 -	11	19 -	10		24
15 -	- 11	17 -	10		9
					Total 100
					e 22 yrs. 2 months
				S.D.	3.5

The mean age for the group was twenty-two years, two months. Nine of the girls were over twenty-seven years of age, and nine were less than seventeen years old.

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It was planned to study the adjustments of those who had been out of school several years as well as of those who had left school recently. For this reason, it was decided to attempt to trace girls who had left school at a time preceding the investigation by ten years and to include those who had left at least one year before the study began. Table II shows the length of time the girls had been out of school and their ages on leaving.

TABLE II

Frequency Distribution of Girls According to Age on School Leaving and Number of Years out of School

	Tears of School	Leaving under 16	Leaving at 16	Leaving over 16	Total
10	(1938)	4	5	1	10
9	(1939)	3	4	1	8
8	(1940)	2	6	1	9
7	(1941)	2	13	0	15
6	(1942)	3	6	0	9
5	(1943)	2	5	0	7
4	(1944)	3	9	1	13
3	(1945)	5	8	0	13
2	(1946)	1	8	1	10
1	(1947)	2	4	0	6
	Total	27	68	5	100

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Since the law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that pupils remain in school until they have reached their sixteenth birthday, sixty-eight per cent of the group left when they reached the legal school age; only five per cent remained in school after they had become sixteen years of age. Twenty-seven per cent left Vocational School when they were less than sixteen; twenty-three of this group transferred to the Trade School in the city; one had left the city, and one had married; one girl returned to her former school and one, after completing the eighth grade, received permission to enter Commerce High School. Two of the girls were attending Trade School at the time of the investigation.

Information obtained at this time revealed that ten of the girls were out of school ten years, while six of them had been out of school only one year. These years from 1938 to 1947 included war years as well as those of pre-war and post-war periods, and it was noted that the largest number of girls left before graduation during the year 1941.

It was felt that it would be significant to learn the reasons which these girls offered for leaving Vocational School before graduation, and to determine their grade level of achievement at school leaving. Table III presents the data in answer to the question of reasons for leaving.

TABLE III

Summary of Reasons Offered by Girls for Leaving Vocational School before Graduation

Reasons	No. of Girls	Per Cent
To Work at Home	12	12.00
Employment outside Home	44	44.00
Illness	10	10.00
Transfer to Other Schools	27	27.00
Other Reasons:		
To marry	1	1.00
Disliked School	5	5.00
Moved out of town	1	1.00
Total	100	100.00

The most common reason for school leaving was to get a job; forty-four per cent gave this reason. Many of these girls came from families with meager income; they could earn wages which looked attractive to them. Several of them planned to be married when they were eighteen years old and wanted to earn money for clothes and entertainment. They received little, if any, encouragement at home to remain in school and in many instances, were urged to go to work in order to eke out the family income. Twelve remained at home to work for the family. Twenty-seven per cent transferred to Trade School or to High School or to former school. Illness

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at home was responsible for ten of the girls leaving before graduation. A small number frankly admitted that they disliked school and were anxious to leave as soon as legally allowed to do so. One girl moved from the city and one left to be married.

Inquiry into the grade level of achievement of these girls at the time they left school disclosed that the records did not contain any results of standardized tests, but that the grade level of placement at the time of leaving indicated the data in Table IV.

TABLE IV

Grade Level of Achievement at Time of School
Leaving of One Hundred Girls in the Study

Grade	Level	Number of Girls	Per Cent
9	- 2	9	9.00
9	- 1	22	22.00
8	- 2	36	36.00
8	- 1	24	24.00
7	- 2	9	9.00
То	tal	100	100.00

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A small group of nine girls left Vocational School just before graduation so that they were listed as grade nine-two pupils. Another group of nine dropped out at the end of grade seven-two. The largest number, thirty-six per cent, left when they had completed grade eight-two. The remaining girls dropped out at periods before the completion of the next term's work; twenty-two were at grade nine-one and twenty-four at grade eight-one level at the time of leaving.

Of the nine girls who left just before graduation, two transferred to other schools, four left because of illness, and three went to work as soon as they became sixteen years of age. Four of these girls are now married and all are working outside the home.

The school records were also used to determine the distribution of the intelligence quotients of these girls. The range was from 61 to 114 with a mean I.Q. of 84.0. These data appear in Table V.

Above 100 I. Q. were found six per cent of the group, and below 70 there were eight per cent of the group. The largest number was classified as between 75 and 90 I.Q. According to Baker, this would indicate that approximately three-fourths of this group would be classified as "slow-learners".

^{1/} Harry J. Baker, Introduction to Exceptional Child. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

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TABLE V
Frequency Distribution of the I.Q.'s of the One Hundred Girls in the Study

I. Q.'s		Number
110-114		1
105-109		2
100-104		3
95- 99		9
90- 94		21
85- 89		9
80- 84		17
75- 79		19
70- 74		11
65- 69		7
60- 64		1
	Total	100
	Mean I.Q.	84 10.3

Of the six girls whose intelligence quotients were over 100, four had graduated from Trade School; one had attended the New England School of Business Science, where she had learned to operate a comptometer and when visited, was employed at this work in the office of one of the leading department stores in the city. The sixth of these girls had left school in 1947, one year before the study began,

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but had not worked; she explained that this fact was due partly to the fact that her mother was receiving financial aid from the city and would lose it if her daughter went to work and contributed to her support.

Four of the eight girls whose intelligence quotients were below 70 were married and three of them have one child each. Two of the remaining four were seeking employment when visited. One was employed by a manufacturing concern to do invisible mending and was receiving more than \$38.00 weekly for the work.

The school records also offered evidence of the regularity or irregularity with which these girls had attended Vocational School. It was felt that these data might add further insight into the problems of this investigation. Table VI presents these data.

TABLE VI

Record of Daily Attendance at the Vocational
School of the One Hundred Girls in the Study

Attendance	Number of Girls	Per Cent
Perfect	0	0
Very Regular	10	10
Regular	31	31
Irregular	59	59
Total	100	100

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Somewhat arbitrarily it was decided that absences of less than twice a month would be considered very regular attendance; two absences in one month would constitute regularity of attendance and more than two absences in a month would be irregular attendance, if these absences were not for illness or of necessity. On this basis, more than 50 per cent of the girls were considered as irregular in attendance.

A study was made by Brazelton to determine the reason for so many absences among high school girls of Tucson, Arizona, with a view to reducing them. More than half were due to causes requiring individual adjustment and truancy. Case studies were made and of these 55 per cent showed a reduction in absences; 45 per cent showed none.

None of the girls at Vocational School were perfect in attendance, and only ten per cent were classified as very regular. Some of these young people were frequently left to their own devices by working mothers and often they overslept or were indifferent about school. Office records show that this habit of poor attendance was well established before these girls came to Vocational School.

1/ Colanthe Brazelton, "Excessive Absences of High School Girls," School Review, Volume 47, January, 1939, p. 51.

Inquiry was next made into the condition of health of these girls while they attended the Vocational School. A health check-up of the girls in the study was made by the school doctor each year that they were in attendance at the Vocational School. It consists of a superficial examination, the results of which are recorded by the school nurse on health cards and kept on file in the school office. From these records the investigator learned the information which is shown in Table VII. Forty-eight per cent of the girls were marked as normal on the health cards. Of the other 52 per cent the largest number of defects (31) were due to decayed teeth. "Dental defects topped the list of physical defects in the 900,000 (20.9 per cent) of those who were examined and rejected for induction into the Army of the United States under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940.

The next most common defects among the girls were: eyes (10); tonsils (10). Four of the girls had impaired hearing; two were underweight; one had a cardiac condition; and one had a skin disease. Several had more than one defect.

The investigator, through her observation and questions,

I/Floyd W. Reeves (Director), "Youth and the Future," The General Report of the American Youth Commission, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 189.

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TABLE VII

Condition of Health during Vocational School
Attendance as Checked on Cumulative Records
of the One Hundred Girls in the Study

Condition of Health	No. of Cases	Cases Remedied	Cases Not Remedied
Normal	48	0	0
Eyes (Defective	e) 10	5	5
Tonsils	10	4	6
Weight	2	0	2
Teeth	31	17	14
Ears	4	0	4
Skin	1	0	1
Heart	11	0	1
Total (Defects	59	26	33

found that 33 of the 59 physical defects present at the time that these girls were in attendance at Vocational School had received no further attention. These included the impaired heart and the ear defects. Six had done nothing about defective tonsils; five of the ten with poor vision still needed attention; and 14 girls admitted having had no dental work done since leaving school, but intended to take care of it. It seemed that the cause for neglect was not due to lack of funds. The girl who most needed dental attention, (with the lowest I.Q.), had worked since leaving school. Her father and brother were also working.

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Educational Data. Of the 100 girls in the study, 45 per cent had further education at schools other than the Vocational School, and 55 per cent had none. Trade School received 23 by transfer, and seven others went there after leaving Vocational School. Two went to business school, three to high school, and two studied nursing. Other places of further education were—a Beauty Culture School, a Dress Design School, Art classes, and a School for Modeling. Table VIII gives these data.

TABLE VIII

Schools Attended by the One Hundred Girls in the Study after Leaving Vocational School

Number Who Attended	Per Cent
30	30.00
2	2.00
3	3.00
2	2.00
55	55.00
8	8.00
100	100.00
	30 2 3 2 2 55 8

One girl carried on a correspondence course in art. Of the girls who studied nursing, one studied practical nursing in Boston and is now employed in a hospital in Worcester; the other girl studied in a New York hospital to become a nurse's aid and is now working at this kind of work in New York.

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Another girl took up dress designing and after four years at the school, graduated. Still another girl went to Art School for two years. It is interesting to note that with very few exceptions, the girls who did continue further with their education took courses related to vocational subjects.

Employment Status. The personal interviews elicited the information regarding the employment status of the girls as shown in Table IX. Twelve of the girls were unemployed and seeking work at the time of the study. Two of these girls had until recently been employed in a factory but it discontinued operations and moved out of Worcester: four were idle because of a slack period in their particular work; the others were seeking jobs where they could earn better wages than they had been getting. Of the three girls who were not seeking employment, one explained that if she went to work, her mother would not receive as much financial aid from the Welfare Department so her mother would rather have her stay at home. Another girl felt that she needed a vacation so she gave up her job in a factory to have one; the third girl was in ill health and was advised by her doctor to rest. Three girls were doing house work at home to help their mothers. There were thirty-two married women who were not engaged in gainful occupations. Two girls were attending the Trade High School, and according to the Director, were doing satisfactory work and would graduate in June, 1949.

TABLE IX
Employment Status of the One Hundred Girls
Who Were Employed at the Time of the Study

Status	Number	Per Cent
Employed full time	47	47
Employed part-time	1	1
Full-time student	1 2	1 2
Unemployed and seeking work	12	12
Unemployed and not seeking work	3	3
Doing housework at home	3	3
Married women at home	32	32
Total	100	100

Of the 100 girls in the study, 48 were found to be working outside the home. The vocational courses prepared about 25 per cent of these for their jobs; stitchers, waitresses, hospital workers, invisible mender, dressmaker, restaurant worker, and one employed for child care, all received some training for these jobs at Vocational School.

There was little stability among these girls as far as continuing on the same job at which they started. Only four girls were working at their initial jobs when visited. One girl said she had been on eight different jobs since leaving school two years before. Several said that they had

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changed so often that they had forgotten some of the places where they had worked. There was, however, a similarity in the type of job that each held. The reason for the frequent changes was partly due to the unusual demands of the war times.

Table X shows the jobs held by the girls at the time of the study.

TABLE X
Summary of Types of Jobs Held by the Girls at the Time of the Study

Type of Job	No
Beautician	1
Cashier	1 3 1
Child Care	1
Clerk	11
Dressmaking	1
Factory Worker	1
Hospital	1 2
House work	
Instructor	1 2 1 9 2 2 2
Inspector	2
Invisible mending	1
Machine tender	9
Office worker	2
Packer	2
Printer	1
Restaurant worker	1 1 5 2
Spinner	1
Stitcher	5
Vaitress	2
Potal	48

When asked if their jobs were satisfactory, the girls, all but one, answered affirmatively. One said that she would

like more wages for the job she was doing-operating a comptometer, but since she had no high school diploma, she could not get a job where higher wages were paid.

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The next question to arise was that of the amount of weekly wages which the girls earned. Table XI shows that the girls were earning wages ranging from about \$20 to over \$40 weekly, with a median wage of \$27.83. It seemed advisable to compare this weekly wage received by these girls who entered employment directly from Vocational School with those who had received further education. Girls who had additional education were receiving a median weekly wage of \$30.06, while those who had completed their formal education at Vocational School, were receiving \$24.08. These data are shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI

Frequency Distribution of the Weekly Wages of the Girls in the Study Who Were Employed at the Time of the Study-Including Those Who Received Further Education and Vocational Training than Vocational School and Those Who Did Not

Weekly Wages	Further Education than Vocational School	No Further Education	Total
\$40 and over	1	1	2
\$35-39	2	0	2
\$30-34	9	8	17
\$25-29	6	3	9
\$20-24	4	12	16
Under \$20	0	2	2
Total Median wage	22 \$ 30.06 Media	26 an \$ 24.08 Med	48 lian\$27.83

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Because it was felt that the girls' employment might be jeopardized by visiting employers of individuals, no check was made in this way. However, confirmation of their statements was sought by inquiring into the usual wage for such jobs as cashiers, press operators, and clerks at the various places of employment.

Another question which seems pertinent dealt with the length of time the girls were idle before finding their first jobs. It appeared that these girls had little difficulty in obtaining jobs. Eighty-nine of the girls (89%) secured a job within six months of leaving school. This group includes the girls who went directly to a job from Vocational School and those who had additional education to that received at the school. Nine per cent did not work outside the home for almost a year after leaving school; two because of illness in the home, and seven because the mother was working and the girl was needed at home. Two of the girls are still at the Trade High School, and therefore have not yet sought full-time employment. These data are presented in Table XII.

TABLE XII

Length of Time that the Girls Were
Idle Before Obtaining First Job

Time	Number	Per Cent
Less than 6 months	89	89.00
6 months to 1 year	9	9.00
More than 1 year	2	2.00
Total	100	100.00

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Table XIII shows a wide variety of jobs. During the years that they made their first contact with a job, these girls found it easy to procure one, for it was just before the war and business was working up to a higher level. About 90% of the girls reported that they had obtained their jobs by personal application.

TABLE XIII
Summary of First Jobs Held by the Girls in the Study

Type of Job	Number
Assembly line	1
At home	1 22 2 1 2 2
At school	2
Cafeteria Worker	2
Cashier	1
Checker	2
Child Care	
Clerk	20
Factory worker	11
Grinder	11
Hospital worker	1 5
Housekeeper	7
Inspector	7 4 1 2
Modeling	1
Office Worker	2
Operator, press, etc.	11
Packer	1
Printer	1
Sealer	1
Seamstress	1
Spinner	1 1 1 1 9
Stitcher	9
Tester	1 7
Waitress Welder	7
Winder	1
Wrapper	1 7 1 1
"Tabbat	
Total	100



It was difficult for most of the girls to remember just how long they worked at their first job. They reported that it seemed a matter of but a few months in most cases, and the reason that they changed their jobs was an attempt to obtain better wages.

One girl stayed at home to help her mother since leaving school two years ago. Another left school to get married and has not been employed in gainful labor. Seven per cent of the girls did housework as their first job. This group left school during 1938 and 1939, when jobs were not so numerous as they were in the years that followed. The largest number (20) worked as clerks in such stores as the Five and Ten Cents stores, fruit stores, and candy shops. Several of these girls worked part-time in these places before leaving school, so continued on as full-time clerks when they left school.

The investigator inquired whether the girls liked the Vocational School and if they were glad that they had gone there. Their answers included such responses as:

"I liked the vocational classes, especially the cooking?"
"I loved the foods class. Miss-- was such fun."

"I never liked school until I went to Vocational."

One girl said, "I always had a hard time at school. I never could understand what the teachers were talking about until I went to Vocational."

"I enjoyed home nursing the best, "said another.

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"I learned a lot about taking care of babies which helped me with my two children."

"I am sorry that I did not stay to finish. I was so anxious to get a job that that was all I could think of."

"We had a lot of fun at Vocational. It wasn't like going to school."

"Sewing was what I liked best. I never would have known a thing about sewing if I hadn't gone to Vocational School."

One girl who was very cooperative and willing, answered all questions, but was not pleased that she had selected Vocational School. She said, "I don't know why I ever went to that school. I certainly did not like anything about it." This girl won a beauty contest and after a six-months course in a school for modeling was employed as a model in New York for a few months. She seemed to feel that she was a little too good for Vocational School. At present, she is a salesgirl in a department store.

Inquiry was made as to what academic subjects proved to be most helpful to the girls. Their answers were too indefinite to record, but the majority thought that they probably used the arithmetic skills most often.

It appeared important to know whether these girls felt that the class in "Occupational Information"included in the curriculum at Vocational School had proved helpful to them.

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One of the major emphases of the course is on ways to apply for a job. Therefore, the girls were questioned as to their manner of obtaining employment. Table XIV summarizes the ways in which the employed girls had obtained their present jobs.

TABLE XIV

A Summary of Ways in which the Employed Girls Had Obtained their Present Jobs

	Number	
Method	of Girls	Per Cent
Direct application	34	71
Through a friend	10	21
Through a relative	2	4
By answering an ad	2	4
Total	48	100

Approximately 70 per cent of these girls had made direct application for their jobs and stated that they felt prepared to do so because of the training offered them in this course. This is in agreement with the study made by Helen Wood which disclosed the fact that 52% of the youth studied said that their vocational training assisted them in getting a job. A study by the Adult Education Council of Denver found the two most successful methods of securing jobs to be personal application and friends.

^{1/} Helen Wood, "Young Workers and their Jobs in 1936: A Survey in Six States. "Publication No. 249, U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Washington, D.C., 1940, p. 25.

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Inquiry as to the practical use made by these girls of the vocational subjects taught them led to the data in Table XV.

TABLE XV
Summary of Practical Uses of Some
Skills Taught at Vocational School

Skills	No. of Girls	Total
Clothing Skills Used:	GIIIS	10081
Outside the home:		
Invisible mending	1	
Dressmaking	1	
Alterations	i	
Power machine	6	9
At home:	0	9
For personal use	37	
Baby clothes	7	
Repairing	40	
Alterations	41	
For relatives	41	
		7.70
Home decoration	10	139
Skills Learned in Foods	3	
Class used:		
Outside the home		
Doughnut maker	1	
Cafeteria worker	2	3
At home		
Frequently-cooking	,	
and serving	36	
Occasionally	-	
cooking and	41	
serving		77
BOLVING		
Home Nursing Skills		
used:		
On the job	1	
Child care	i	
	2	3
Hospital Worker	2	3
At home		
Care of sick	7	
Baby care	6	
Preparing food		
for the sick	2	
Personal hygiene	19	
First aid	9	43

Since the majority of these girls (69) did not go beyoud the eighth grade they failed to reach the class in Home They all had, however, a course in both Foods and Clothing. The skills taught in clothing were used most frequently by these girls both in the home and on the job outside the home. The girl doing invisible mending in a large manufacturing plant reported that she enjoyed the work and was making on an average of forty dollars a week. Another girl who had graduated from Trade High School was working in a dressmaking shop where the investigator interviewed her. Another girl visited on the job, was employed in the alteration department of a large department store. With two exceptions, all the girls said that they used the skills taught in the clothing class in at least one way, either in making their own clothes, in repairing them, or in altering them. Many still use the recipes that they were taught to use in the foods class. Those who had taken the home nursing course spoke enthusiastically about it. They felt considerable pride in the fact that they knew first aid, how to take care of a sick person, and baby care. Table XV on the preceding page summarizes this information.

Social Data. Of the one hundred girls in the study, forty-five had married. Five of these had made unstable marriages. One girl was planning to become reconciled to her soldier husband when he returned to this country after duty in Europe. One girl was made a widow by the war and has since

remarried. Table XVI shows the marital status of the 100 girls in the study.

TABLE XVI

Marital Status of the Girls in the Study

Status	No. of Girls	Per Cent
Unmarried.	55	55.00
Married	45	45.00
Divorced	3	3.00
Separated	2	2.00

There were 32 children born to 26 of this group as shown by Table XVII. Six of the girls each had two children, while twenty had one child each. Nineteen married couples had no offspring at the time of the study. There were five children belonging to parents living apart. Table XVII gives these data.

TABLE XVII
Offspring of the Married Group

No. of Children	No. of Girls	Total Children
0	19	0
1	20	20
2 Total	6	12
Total	45	32

These girls have much free time and it is well to consider the way in which this time is spent. The public dance halls are more popular with these girls than are other dance places. Five of the girls reported attending dances more than once a week, one of these said she went dancing three times a week and once to the movies. Fifteen per cent went to dances once a week, and the other eighty per cent reported going only occasionally. Table XVIII gives these data.

TABLE XVIII Frequency with Which Dancing Is a Pastime for the Girls in the Study

Dancing as a Pastime	No. of Girls
More than once a week	5
Once a week	15
Less than once a week	80
Total	100

Another leisure-time activity of young people is attending the movies, and the investigator thought that it might be of value to find out just how popular this form of entertainment was with these girls of the study. Attendance figures at movies reported by Professor Dale based on studies at Columbus, Ohio, indicate that "in the age range from 8 to 1/ Edgar Dale, Children's Attendance at Motion Pictures.

New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935.

19 years over 20 per cent of the children were found to attend movies twice or more a week." This is about what the writer found (19 per cent), in her questioning as shown in Table XIX. Dale also found that "forty-five per cent of the young people attend movies once a week." This, too, agrees with the findings in this study. Three girls said that they never went to the movies. Table XIX shows these data.

TABLE XIX

Frequency with which the Girls in the Study Attended the Movies

Attendance at Movies	No. of Girls
More than once a week	19
Once a week	48
Less than once a Week	33
Total	100

Do these girls have hobbies? If so, what kind of hobby do they enjoy? The questionnaire revealed that the most popular type of hobby is crafts. About 30 per cent of the girls claimed as their hobby handwork, such as knitting, crocheting, embroidery, and dressmaking. One married woman made many things for church fairs, and for private sale.

^{1/} Dale, op. cit.

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The collections of the five per cent include such things as pictures, salt shakers, and miniature vases. One of the most interesting of the collections displayed to the investigator was a collection of small statues of the saints. These were arranged very attractively on a shelf specially made by the girl's husband who had also fixed a lighting arrangement which set off the collection most attractively. Three per cent of the girls mentioned playing cards as a hobby. One girl gave drawing and another, playing the piano as their particular hobby. Over half the group (55 per cent) expressed the opinion that they had no hobby interests. Many gave dancing or bowling as hobbies, but since these two activities have been put into a sports table, they are not included here. Table XX is a summary of the hobbies as given by the girls in the study.

TABLE XX Summary of Hobbies Reported by the One Hundred Girls in the Study

Hobby	No. of Girls	Per Cent
Arts	2	2
Bicycling	i	1
Collections	5	5
Crafts	30	30
Gardening	1	1
Games	3	3
Photography	1	1
Reading	2	2
None	55	55
Total	100	100

Though more than half of these girls stated that they had no hobby, when questioned as to their favorite sports they claimed enthusiasm for bowling and skating. Several belonged to bowling teams and many still wear skating outfits that they made at Vocational School when they go roller skating. Table XXI is a summary of sports that the girls like.

TABLE XXI
Summary of Sports in which the Girls of the Study Participated

Sport	No. of Girls
Bowling	45
Roller skating	34
Spectator only	12
Swimming	17
None	8

Eight of the group claimed no interest in sports of any kind and twelve declared that they preferred to watch basketball, football, or baseball games and had little further interest in sports. Seventeen mentioned swimming as their favorite sport.

Many implications lie in these data which will receive further consideration in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the data gathered and examined, it seems fair to express the following summary of statements as findings which are typical of the population in the study.

Summary of the Findings:

Personal Data.

- The age span of the 100 girls was from 16 years to 28 years, 8 months.
- 2. At 16 years of age, 68% of the group left school.
- The most common reason for leaving school was to go to work, as reported by 44%.
- 4. The grade level of achievement attained by 36% of the girls was that of grade 8-2; 22% reached grade 9-1, and 24% left at grade 8-1.
- 5. While at Vocational School, 59% of the 100 girls had irregular attendance records.
- The I. Q.'s of the group ranged from 61 to 114, with a mean I.Q. of 84.
- The largest number (45%) were classified as between
 and 90 I.Q.
- 8. While these girls attended Vocational School, 48% were listed as having normal health records.
- 9. The most common physical defect was that of dental caries, 31% being so classified.

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- Fifty-five per cent of the girls completed their formal education at Vocational School.
- 11. Thirty per cent attended the Trade School after leaving Vocational School; 23 per cent the day classes, and 7 per cent the evening classes.

Employment Data.

- 1. Slightly less than one-half (48%) of those studied were employed full time at the time of the study.
- 2. There was a variety of jobs held by the girls. The largest number (11) at one job was employed as
- 3. The median wage for the total group working was \$27.83; for those having further education,\$30.06; and \$24.08 for those with no further formal education.
- Eighty-nine per cent of the group obtained their first job within six months of school leaving.
- Approximately 70% of the 48 girls employed at the time of the study made direct application for the jobs.
- The clothing skills were the vocational skills most used by the girls.

Social Data.

Forty-five per cent of the girls were married;
 55% were unmarried;
 5% had unstable marriages.
 There were 32 children born to the married group.

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Social Data. (continued)

- Fifty-five per cent reported that they had no special interest in hobbies.
- Thirty per cent expressed an interest in crafts, such as knitting and crocheting.
- Attendance at the movies at least once a week was reported by 67%.
- 5. Twenty per cent attended dances at least once a week.
- Bowling was the favorite sport with 45% of the girls, while roller skating interested 34%, though these sports overlapped.

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Educational Implications

These girls who had attended Vocational School at Worcester, Massachusetts, had intended to leave school as soon as they reached the legal school age. Their reason for school-leaving was, for the most part, economic, as nearly half of them went to work immediately from school.

While the attendance at Vocational School had been irregular in many instances, one-fourth of the group had reached the ninth grade level while the largest number achieved success at the end of grade eight. Their I. Q.'s as checked in school records revealed that about one-half of them might be classified as slow-learners under Baker's terminology.

Though the health records were little more than the results of infrequent and casual inspection, they did reveal that the most common physical defect among these young girls was that of dental caries. This is in keeping with the contention of Lourie who says that it is an important factor in the health of school children and may lead to permanent damage, if not checked in the early stages.

^{1/} Harry J. Baker, Introduction to Exceptional Child. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

^{2/} Lloyd Lourie, "Gladly at School," Nation's Schools, XIX: 29, June, 1937.

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From these facts we may imply that guidance in this respect is necessary for these young women particularly in view of the fact that about 45 per cent of the reported cases of dental caries had not been remedied.

Education. Approximately thirty per cent of these girls continued their education beyond Vocational School and sought training at Trade School. Since the large majority have concluded their formal education at the Vocational School, it must be definitely borne in mind that they must be prepared directly for out-of-school life while they are still in attendance at school. Wise procedure would provide for the last term of their education to be pointed as functionally as possible.

It is to be noted further that of the forty-nine girls who were employed when investigated, fifteen were actually aware of the fact that they were making daily use of the skills learned in vocational classes. The married girls at home reported wide use of this vocational training almost without exception. This would indicate that such training is valuable for these girls and should be continued. Perhaps further integration of the vocational skills with academic work would make the subject matter more meaningful.

Employment. As in many of the studies reported, these school "drop-outs" experienced much stress in making economic adjustments. They attempted a wide variety of jobs mostly in the unskilled or semi-skilled classification.

Most of the group made direct application for employment. From this we may infer that the class in "Occupational Information" may well make use of "job application" procedures. Much careful attention to the needs of these girls will lead to group guidance through this means. Very few of the girls were found working at their initial jobs, and implications for cooperation between potential employers and the school lie in this fact. Try-out or exploratory courses may prove helpful.

The girls who had further education received slightly higher weekly wages than did those who had completed school work at Vocational School, indicating that there is still much to be done before these girls can be considered adequately prepared for employment.

Social. These girls whose average age was slightly more than twenty-one years, had intended to marry young. Their education should be concerned with helping them to prepare to become home-makers.

There is definite need for both group instruction and individual counseling for the purpose of equipping these young people for the responsibilities of family living. The many practical and valuable aspects of home management and child care are valuable parts of training for home and family life.

Little resourcefulness was apparent among these girls as to ways to spend their leisure moments. Attendance at movies was decidedly the most popular activity. It was encouraging to note that many of the girls did resort to crafts such as knitting and crocheting, but more than half reported that they had no hobby. As the present trend indicates that there will be more leisure time for people in general, some provision should be made in the school program to teach the "wise use of leisure time."

Having endeavored to develop in these girls of the slow-learning group abilities and attitudes to prepare them to take their part in community life, some follow-up work in their behalf is a real necessity. A placement bureau would help to bridge the gap between school and the work-aday world. It might well be the sustaining hand that would insure a better future for these young people.

Suggestions for Further Study

- Make a follow-up study of the boys who have gone to Vocational School.
- A comparative study of girls who have had the same number of years at school but with no vocational training with a similar group who have attended Vocational School.
- Make a study of occupations in the community that are available to girls who leave Vocational School at sixteen years of age.
- Discover possibilities of part-time employment for these girls while at school that might lead to permanent placement.
- 5. A system of testing devised for young people to locate early those who would profit by vocational training.
- Study post-war jobs in relation to a practical training program in school and on the job.
- Study the occupationally significant characteristics of successful placement, as health, personal habits, leisure time activities, and individual work interests.
- To work out a plan for occupational guidance, systematic induction, and follow-up of the slow-learning girl in the working world.
- Organize a plan to help pupils in plotting the direction of their occupational choices through consideration of: (a) pupil ability, interests, and aptitudes; (b) existing occupational opportunities; and (c) occupational requirements.

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APPENDIX



APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionaire for personal interview with girls who left ${\tt Vocational \ School}$ before graduating.

GENERAL INFORMATION

I	NameAddress
II	Date of birth
III	year month day year month
IV	Length of time spent at Vocational School
V	C.A. at time of leaving school
VI	Reason for leaving school:
	1. to work at home 2. employment 5. other reasons (list)
VII	Grade level at time of leaving Vocational School 7-2 8-1 8-2 9-1 9-2
VIII	Condition of health during Vocational School attendance
	1. Normal 2. Defects (remedied) (not remedied) (a) eyes (b) tonsils (e) ears (c) weight (f) skin (d) teeth (g) lungs
IX	Regularity of attendance at Vocational School
	1. Perfect
	 Very regular (less than two absences per month) Regular (two absences per month) Irregular (more than two absences per month)
K	School attended after leaving Vocational School
	1. Trade School 2. Evening School 3. Business School 4. Beauty Culture School 5. Others

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

I	First job after leaving school	
II	Kind of job	
III	How long idle before obtaining first job	
IV	Present job	
	1. type of work 2. weekly pay \$20 \$20-\$25 \$25-\$30 \$30-\$35 \$35-\$40 over \$40	
	3. how procured (a) parents (b) relatives other than parents (c) answer to advertisement (d) personal application (e) others (explain)	
V	Are you employed full time? " " part " " " unemployed and seeking work? " " " not seeking work? (reason) " doing housework at home?	
	ATTITUDE TOWARD VOCATIONAL SCHOOL	
I	Has Vocational School helped? yes no	
	If yes, what school subjects helped most in your work? (a) Arithmetic (b) Reading (c) English	
II	While you were at Vocational School, did you receive any occupational information about your present job? Probe Yes No	
III	Do you make use of Vocational training received	
	frequently occasionally not at all	
	1. In sewing 2. In cooking a.	
	b. b.	
	c. d.	

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT DATA

I Marital Status

1. single
2. married 3. widowed 5. separated 4. divorced 6. offspring

II Leisure time activities

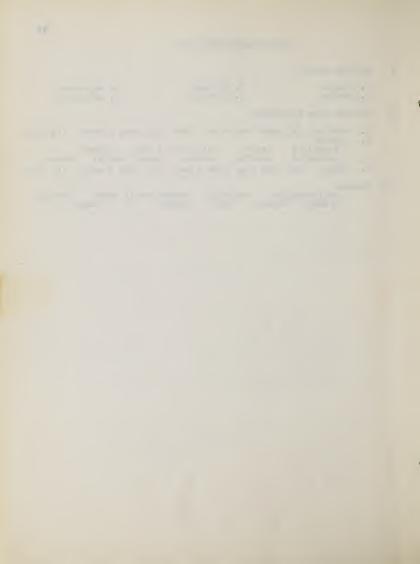
> 1. Dancing (a) more than once a week (b) once a week (c) less 2. Hobbies

bicycling crafts collecting items camera gardening drawing sewing games (cards) others

3. Movies (a) more than once a week (b) once a week (c) less

III Sports

rollerskating swimming spectator at games bowling hiking tennis golf others none



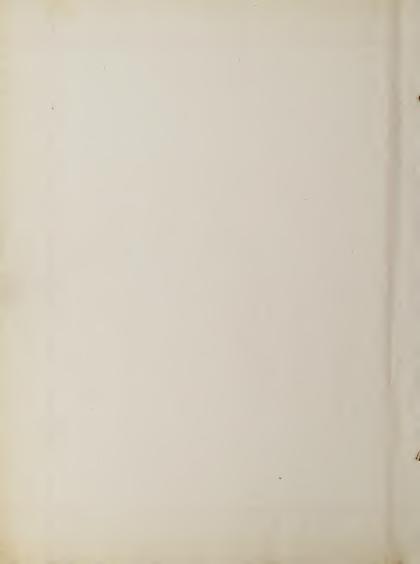
APPENDIX B
HOME VISIT CARD



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Signature of Teacher	Signature of Parent or Guardian
Printed at W	Vorcester Vocational School

Home Visit

Date of Visit





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